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ABSTRACT

The social, economic, and political conditions that exist in Michigan are outlined in an attempt to predict what effect these conditions will have on the future of the state's public education system. Accompanying the depressed economic status of Michigan's automobile industry and the state's declining school enrollments, numerous cutbacks have already been made in public educational proposals, programs and personnel. School buildings are closing, teachers are being pink-slipped, and traditional school revenue sources are drying up. Bus transportation is being curtailed in some districts. One district has begun the practice of charging a fee for participation in the school varsity sports program. Special education programs are suggested to be cut. The problems and issues that face Michigan today will not be solved or resolved overnight. Severe economic restrictions demand answers to the following questions: (1) what programs are to be cut; (2) what programs are the most cost-efficient; (3) what programs are the most effective; and (4) what programs can be consolidated or combined for greater effectiveness. These questions must be answered while keeping in mind the state's demographic changes and trends, its labor force changes, and the demands of the new "technological revolution." (RL)

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21ST ANNUAL

MICHIGAN SCHOOL TESTING CONFERENCE

TUESDAY - FEBRUARY 24, 1981

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"MICHIGAN EDUCATION IN THE 80'S"

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LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, DISTINGUISHED GUESTS.

IT IS AN HONOR FOR ME TO BE WITH YOU THIS MORNING AND I GREATLY APPRECIATE THE OPPORTUNITY TO BE ABLE TO TAKE PART IN THIS, YOUR 21ST ANNUAL SCHOOL TESTING CONFERENCE.

WHAT I WOULD LIKE TO DO TODAY IS TO INDICATE TO YOU HOW I SEE THE FUTURE IN REGARD TO MICHIGAN EDUCATION; MENTION SOME OF THE CHANGES THAT MAY HAVE A DIRECT BEARING ON THE WORK THAT WE DO, AND PERHAPS MAKE SOME PREDICTIONS.

THE THEME OF YOUR CONFERENCE -- "STREAMLINING, STRENGTHENING AND SELLING EDUCATION" -- IS MOST APROPOS. IT DESCRIBES VERY SUCCINCTLY THE TASK THAT LIES BEFORE THE EDUCATION ENTERPRISE. AND, AS WE TRY TO DETERMINE WHAT HAS TO BE DONE OR WHAT SHOULD BE DONE, WE ALL KNOW THAT IT CAN ONLY BE DONE IF WE TAKE A HARD LOOK INTO THE FUTURE AND TRY TO SPELL OUT THE SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL CONDITIONS THAT MAY EXIST; AND AS A CONSEQUENCE, WHAT NEW DEMANDS OF EDUCATION WILL THEN BE MADE.

SEVEN YEARS AGO, IN THE BOOK "LEARNING FOR TOMORROW," EDITOR/AUTHOR ALVIN TOFFLER WROTE IN CHAPTER ONE:

"ALL EDUCATION SPRINGS FROM SOME IMAGE OF THE FUTURE.... I WOULD CONTEND, IN FACT, THAT NO EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION TODAY CAN SET SENSIBLE GOALS OR DO AN EFFECTIVE JOB UNTIL ITS MEMBERS SUBJECT THEIR OWN ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT TOMORROW TO CRITICAL ANALYSIS. FOR THEIR SHARED OR COLLECTIVE IMAGE OF THE FUTURE DOMINATES THE DECISIONS MADE IN THE INSTITUTION."

WHAT ABOUT THE FUTURE?

LAST WEDNESDAY MORNING AT A MEETING OF THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION IN LANSING, MR. DONALD SMITH, DIRECTOR OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT DIVISION, INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, AND MR. MIKE CONBOY AND MR. DOWNS HERROLD OF THE SAME DIVISION, MADE A PRESENTATION ENTITLED: "MICHIGAN ECONOMY, TRENDS, AUTOMOBILE INDUSTRY IMPLICATIONS."

THIS IS PART OF A PROGRAM FOR ECONOMIC EDUCATION SPONSORED BY THE MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION IN COOPERATION WITH THE MICHIGAN INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPERS ASSOCIATION, THE MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, CONSUMERS POWER COMPANY, DETROIT EDISON COMPANY, MICHIGAN BELL TELEPHONE COMPANY, AND MICHIGAN CONSOLIDATED GAS COMPANY.

ESSENTIALLY, WHAT THEY PRESENTED WAS A LOOK INTO THE FUTURE AND THE IMPACT THAT INCREASINGLY HIGH FUEL COSTS HAS HAD AND WILL CONTINUE TO HAVE ON THE AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY. WHEN YOU SPEAK OF A CORPORATION LIKE CHRYSLER HAVING DIFFICULTY, WE TEND TO FORGET THE VERY MANY AUXILIARY COMPANIES AND INDUSTRIES THAT ARE DEPENDENT UPON OUR AUTOMOTIVE COMPANIES.

FOR EXAMPLE, WHEN YOU GO FROM AN 8-CYLINDER TO A 4-CYLINDER ENGINE, WE FIND THAT THERE ARE A GREAT MANY COUNTRIES (JAPAN AND GERMANY BEING THE OUTSTANDING ONES) THAT CAN PRODUCE THESE ENGINES AT A COST BELOW OURS.

WHEN YOU MAKE A CAR LIGHTER IN ORDER TO REALIZE GREATER MILEAGE, THE IMPACT IS ON THE STEEL INDUSTRY.

WHEN YOU GO TO FRONT-WHEEL DRIVE, ALL THOSE COMPANIES INVOLVED WITH PRODUCING COMPONENTS FOR THE REAR-WHEEL DRIVE GO OUT OF BUSINESS.

WHEN YOU CANNOT COMPETE WITH LABOR COSTS OF OTHER CAR PRODUCING COUNTRIES -- JAPAN, BOLIVIA , MEXICO, FRANCE, ITALY -- THEN YOU AUTOMATE AND MOVE NEW PLANTS AND INVESTMENTS INTO LABOR AREAS THAT ARE LESS COSTLY.

GENERAL MOTORS, FORD AND CHRYSLER ARE NOW COMMITTED TO TEN-YEAR PROGRAMS -- PROGRAMS BASED ON CURRENT CONDITIONS, FUTURE TRENDS AND ANTICIPATED DEMANDS. AND IF THEY ARE RIGHT, THEY'LL STILL BE AROUND IN 1990.

I HAVE MENTIONED AT LENGTH THE SITUATION IN THE AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY BECAUSE HERE IN MICHIGAN, LIKE NO OTHER STATE, WHEN PEOPLE ARE NOT BUYING NEW CARS, THE CRITICAL ECONOMIC SERIOUSNESS IS DOUBLED. AND THE ECONOMIC CLIMATE AND THE RECESSION IN MICHIGAN HAS ALREADY HAD AND WILL CONTINUE TO HAVE A TREMENDOUS IMPACT ON OUR SYSTEM OF PUBLIC EDUCATION.

FOR BETTER OR WORSE THEN IN EDUCATION, WE FIND OURSELVES IN A TRANSITION OF MAJOR SIGNIFICANCE. FROM AN EXTENDED PERIOD OF GROWTH, EXPANSION AND BURGEONING ENROLLMENTS, MICHIGAN SCHOOLS ARE FINDING IT NECESSARY TO SHARPLY CURTAIL PROPOSALS, PROGRAMS AND PERSONNEL. ENROLLMENTS ARE DECLINING. SCHOOL BUILDINGS ARE CLOSING. TEACHERS ARE BEING PINK-SLIPPED, AND TRADITIONAL SCHOOL REVENUE SOURCES ARE DRYING UP.

WHAT IS TAKING PLACE NOW DID NOT HAPPEN YESTERDAY. THE PROBLEMS AND ISSUES THAT FACE EDUCATION TODAY HAVE BEEN A LONG TIME IN COMING. ALMOST WITHOUT EXCEPTION, EVERY SOCIAL, POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND MORAL CHANGE THAT HAS TAKEN PLACE IN

THE PAST TWENTY YEARS HAS HAD (DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY) AN IMPACT ON THE EDUCATIONAL ENTERPRISE.

WHAT THIS MEANS TODAY, IN VERY SIMPLE TERMS, IS THAT WHEN YOU BEGIN TALKING OF MAKING CHANGES OR CUTTING PROGRAMS, YOU FIND IT NECESSARY TO DEAL NOT JUST WITH ECONOMIC RESTRICTIONS, BUT ALSO WITH SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL AND POLITICAL FACTORS.

FOR EXAMPLE, RECALL PETITIONS NOW ARE BEING CIRCULATED IN LANSING BECAUSE OF SCHOOL CLOSING ACTION TAKEN BY MEMBERS OF THE LANSING BOARD OF EDUCATION.

BUS TRANSPORTATION IN SOME SCHOOL DISTRICTS IS BEING CURTAILED BECAUSE OF COSTS AND PARENTS ARE UP IN ARMS ABOUT IT.

ONE SCHOOL DISTRICT HAS ALREADY BEGUN THE PRACTICE OF CHARGING A FEE FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE SCHOOL VARSITY SPORTS PROGRAM; OTHER SCHOOLS ARE CONSIDERING THIS POSSIBILITY.

A SUGGESTED CUTBACK IN SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS, BROUGHT, AND CONTINUES TO BRING, A FLOOD OF MAIL INTO THE DEPARTMENT FROM VERY CONCERNED PARENTS.

TAX REFORM IS A CONSTANT TOPIC AMONG SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES.

WHAT IS TAKING PLACE IS THAT THE SERIOUS ECONOMIC CONDITION IN WHICH EDUCATION FINDS ITSELF MAY DO WHAT PHILOSOPHICAL ARGUMENTS, INNOVATIONS AND STOP-GAP CORRECTIVE PROGRAMS HAVE FAILED TO DO -- AND THAT IS TO FORCE THE EDUCATIONAL ESTABLISHMENT TO MAKE SIGNIFICANT AND SUBSTANTIVE CHANGES IN MANAGEMENT, IN TEACHER EDUCATION AND RETRAINING, AND IN SCHOOL PROGRAMS.

AS WE LOOK AHEAD, LET'S TAKE A QUICK LOOK BACK.

THE 1960'S BROUGHT US COUNTLESS NUMBERS OF MANDATED REFORM PROGRAMS, NEW PROPOSALS AND SURE-FIRE EDUCATION "PANACEAS."

THE 1970'S THEN BROUGHT US THE "EVALUATORS AND THE ASSESSORS" WHO PROCEEDED TO TELL US WHAT WE WERE DOING WRONG.

WE ARE NOW INTO THE 1980'S. WHAT IS GOING TO HAPPEN?

TO BEGIN WITH, I DON'T BELIEVE THAT THE ECONOMIC PICTURE IS GOING TO IMPROVE VERY RAPIDLY, AND I AM WILLING TO BET ALL THE "JELLYBEANS" I HAVE ON THAT STATEMENT.

THE PROBLEMS AND ISSUES THAT FACE US TODAY WILL NOT BE SOLVED OR RESOLVED OVERNIGHT.

SECOND, DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGES AND TRENDS WOULD INDICATE THAT AN OLDER, AGING POPULATION MAY NOT GIVE "EDUCATION" A TOP-SPOT PRIORITY WHEN CONSIDERATION OF OTHER SERVICES AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE ARE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT. ONLY ABOUT 27 PERCENT OF THE VOTING PUBLIC HAVE SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN.

THIRD, I THINK THAT WE ARE GOING TO SEE A GREATER SHIFT TOWARD THE "CENTRALIZATION OF THE RESPONSIBILITY" OF EDUCATION AT THE STATE OR FEDERAL LEVEL, PARTICULARLY AS SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS FOCUS IN AND CONCENTRATE ON SPECIAL NEEDS.

AND FOURTH, IN ADDITION TO DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGES, THERE ARE LABOR FORCE CHANGES TAKING PLACE THAT ARE NOT FULLY REALIZED AT THE MOMENT.

FOR EXAMPLE, EMPLOYMENT EXPERTS PREDICT THAT 50 PERCENT OF THE JOBS THAT WILL BECOME AVAILABLE IN THE NEXT TWENTY YEARS, DO NOT EXIST TODAY. THEY ALSO STATE THAT 80 PERCENT OF ALL THE JOBS THAT DO OPEN DURING THIS SAME PERIOD OF TIME WILL NOT REQUIRE A COLLEGE DEGREE.

WHILE YOU THINK ABOUT THAT STATEMENT, KEEP IN MIND THAT THERE ARE STILL A GREAT MANY SCHOOL DISTRICTS THAT EQUATE A SUCCESSFUL EDUCATION PROGRAM TO THE NUMBER OF THEIR HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES WHO GO ON TO DO COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY WORK.

LET US ALSO KEEP IN MIND THAT WE ARE NO LONGER A PRIMARILY MANUFACURING LABOR INTENSIVE ECONOMY. THE NATURE OF WORK IS CHANGING AS THIS COUNTRY BECOMES MORE AND MORE DEPENDENT UPON PROFESSIONAL, TECHNICAL AND CLERICAL SKILLS. RIGHT NOW, OVER 65 PERCENT OF EMPLOYMENT CAN BE FOUND IN THE SERVICE INDUSTRIES.

THE NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCE HAS INDICATED THAT A "TECHNOLOGICAL REVOLUTION" THAT COULD HAVE A SOCIAL IMPACT EVEN GREATER THAN THAT of THE ORIGINAL INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION MAY HAVE BEGUN LAST YEAR. AND THE KEY IS "INTELLIGENT AUTOMATION"; THE ROBOTS THAT ARE MOVING INTO THE FACTORIES ARE ALSO MOVING INTO THE OFFICES.

CONLIN NORMAN OF THE WORLDWATCH INSTITUTE HAS STATED:

> "THE DEVELOPMENT OF INDUSTRIAL TECHNOLOGY LARGELY ENHANCED HUMAN PHYSICAL CAPABILITIES, ENABLING PEOPLE TO HARNESS MORE ENERGY, TRAVEL FASTER, PROCESS AND SHAPE MATERIALS MORE EASILY, AND SO ON. BUT THE DEVELOPMENT OF MICROELECTRONICS EXTENDS MENTAL CAPABILITIES, FOR IT INCREASES THE ABILITY TO PROCESS, STORE AND COMMUNICATE INFORMATION, AND IT ENABLES ELECTRONIC "INTELLIGENCE" TO BE INCORPORATED INTO A BROAD RANGE OF PRODUCTS AND PROCESSES."

LAST WEEK AT A CONFERENCE HELD AT ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY, JUDITH EDWARDS (COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY DIRECTOR AT THE NORTHWEST REGIONAL EDUCATIONAL LABORATORY IN PORTLAND, OREGON) STATED:

> "THE EDUCATIONAL REVOLUTION PREDICTED 15 YEARS AGO IS NOW ON THE HORIZON AND THE CATALYST IS THE "MICROCOMPUTER."

IN THE MARCH ISSUE OF DISCOVERY MAZAZINE THERE IS AN ITEM FOR THE HUGHES AIRCRAFT COMPANY, THIS COMPANY NOW HAS IN ITS LABORATORIES EXPERIMENTAL HARDWARE, INCLUDING SIGNAL PROCESSORS, SWITCHES, AND LOGIC CIRCUITS THAT HAVE DEMONSTRATED TRANSMITTING RATES UP TO 4 BILLION BITS PER SECOND.

THIS WOULD MAKE POSSIBLE THE TRANSMISSION OF THE ENTIRE ENCYCLOPAEDIA BRITANNICA IN JUST 2 SECONDS!

THAT IS HOW FAST THINGS ARE CHANGING.

THIS, THEN, IS JUST PART OF THE FUTURE THAT FACES US.

IF WE ALSO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT DECLINING ENROLLMENTS, DECLINING RESOURCES, AND DECLINING SCHOOL SUPPORT, THE NEED FOR "STREAMLINING" OUR EDUCATIONAL VEHICLE BECOMES QUITE OBVIOUS.

I WOULD HOPE THAT THERE IS NO ONE HERE WHO HONESTLY BELIEVES THAT WE CAN CONTINUE TO OPERATE IN THE "SAME OLD WAY"; THAT WE CAN CONTINUE TO PAY HOMAGE TO OUR "EDUCATIONAL SACRED COWS."

IT IS TIME FOR THE EDUCATIONAL ESTABLISHMENT TO REVIEW AND REASSESS WHAT IT IS DOING, AND THEN TAKE A STRONG STAND ON WHAT THE "SCHOOLS CAN DO AND WHAT THEY CANNOT DO."

EDUCATION MUST BEGIN TO REEVALUATE ITS OVERALL FUNCTION IN OUR DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY AND STOP TRYING TO BE ALL THINGS TO ALL PEOPLE.

DELIVERY SYSTEMS MUST BE REVIEWED AND, IF NECESSARY, CHANGED OR MODIFIED IF IT WILL MEAN A BETTER END PRODUCT. I AM NOT NECESSARILY TALKING ABOUT NEW PROGRAMS, NEW PROPOSALS OR UNTRIED INNOVATIONS.

I THINK IT VERY NECESSARY THAT WE TAKE A LONG, HARD LOOK AT THE WAY WE MANAGE OUR SCHOOLS. EDUCATION IS A LABOR INTENSIVE OPERATION. IF WE EXPECT TO MAKE SIGNIFICANT ECONOMIES, THEN WE HAVE TO REVIEW HOW WE ARE DOING THINGS IN THE "FRONT OFFICE" AND CONSIDER WAYS IN WHICH THE OPERATION CAN BE IMPROVED.

MOST CERTAINLY, WE NEED TO CAREFULLY CONSIDER THE WAY IN WHICH WE RECRUIT TEACHING TALENT; THE WAY IN WHICH OUR COLLEGES OF EDUCATION PREPARE THOSE WHO INTEND TO TEACH; AND

THE RETRAINING AND REVITALIZING OF OUR TEACHING RESOURCE. THERE HAS TO BE GREATER COMMUNICATION BETWEEN SUCCESSFUL TEACHING PROGRAMS AND TEACHER PROGRAMS IF WE ARE TO REALIZE MAXIMUM UTILIZATION OF OUR HUMAN RESOURCES.

WHAT ABOUT CONSOLIDATION? I KNOW THAT "BIG" IS NOT ALWAYS GOOD, BUT WHEN YOU HAVE SCHOOL DISTRICTS THAT ARE TRYING TO OPERATE A FULL HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM AT A TIME WHEN THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS CANNOT JUSTIFY IT, THEN WE NEED TO DO SOMETHING. INCIDENTALLY, I AM NOT TALKING JUST ABOUT "RURAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS," THERE ARE METROPOLITAN DISTRICTS THAT NEED TO GET TOGETHER.

I MADE MENTION A MOMENT AGO OF OUR DELIVERY SYSTEMS. THAT REALLY IS WHAT IT IS ALL ABOUT. A GREAT DEAL OF SERIOUS THOUGHT AND TIME SHOULD BE GIVEN TO DETERMINE WHAT THE FUNDAMENTAL, ESSENTIAL INGREDIENTS ARE IN AN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM.

THE PEOPLE OUT THERE -- THE PEOPLE WE DEAL WITH -- ARE CONCERNED. LET ME QUOTE ONE PARAGRAPH FROM AN EDITORIAL THAT APPEARED IN THE GRAND RAPIDS PRESS TWO WEEKS AGO:

> "ANY SCHOOL DISTRICT THAT EQUATES BUS TRANSPORTATION, DRIVER EDUCATION OR A HIGHLY SOPHISTICATED TEAM SPORTS PROGRAM

TO BASIC EDUCATION EITHER ISN'T SERIOUS ABOUT ITS WORK OR ISN'T FACING UP TO THE SCHOOL CRISES WHICH IS CRASHING DOWN UPON THIS STATE. AND IF PARENTS DON'T UNDERSTAND THE PROBLEM, THEN IT IS BECAUSE BOARDS OF EDUCATION AND SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS HAVEN'T BEEN EXPLAINING IT WELL ENOUGH. OR MAYBE THE PARENTS THEMSELVES ARE VICTIMS OF AN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM WHERE MORE POINTS ARE SCORED BY SHOOTING BASKETS THAN BY READING AND UNDERSTANDING ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL ISSUES."

ATTITUDES LIKE THIS BECOME CRITICALLY IMPORTANT WHEN SEVERE ECONOMIC RESTRICTIONS ARE IN PLACE:

WHAT PROGRAMS DO YOU CUT?

WHAT PROGRAMS ARE THE MOST COST-EFFICIENT?

WHAT PROGRAMS ARE THE MOST EFFECTIVE?

WHAT PROGRAMS CAN BE CONSOLIDATED OR COMBINED FOR GREATER EFFECTIVENESS?

HISTORICALLY, MICHIGAN HAS BEEN A NATIONAL LEADER IN THE FIELD OF EDUCATION. FROM THE EARLIEST DAYS, ITS SYSTEM OF PUBLIC EDUATION HAS HAD THE ABILITY AND FLEXIBILITY TO ADAPT TO CHANGE WITHOUT LOSING OR DESTROYING THOSE BASIC QUALITIES THAT HAVE MADE IT OUTSTANDING. BY THE TIME IT REACHED STATEHOOD IN 1837, IT HAD THE NATION'S FIRST STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION AND A SYSTEM OF EDUCATION THAT SERVED AS AN EXAMPLE FOR MANY OTHER STATES.

MICHIGAN SCHOOLS, IN MY OPINION, ARE DOING MORE THAN THEY AHVE EVER DONE BEFORE -- FOR MORE CHILDREN AND YOUTH THAN EVERY BEFORE -- AND IN MORE DIFFERENT KINDS OF PROGRAMS THAN EVER BEFORE.

HOWEVER, THIS DOES NOT MEAN THAT WE SHOULD SIT STILL AND NOT TRY TO MOVE FORWARD. THERE IS STILL ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT, FOR MODIFICATIONS, FOR CHANGES.

ESSENTIAL TO ANY ACTION WE MAY TAKE IS THE NEED FOR THE EDUCATIONAL ENTERPRISE TO BUILD UPON AND TO STRENTHEN ITS SUPPORT BASE. CERTAINLY WE NEED TO IMPROVE, BUT WE HAVE A GOOD PRODUCT. WE HAVE DONE A COMMENDABLE JOB. AND WE NEED TO LET OUR CLIENTS KNOW THIS. THOSE OF US IN EDUCATION HAVE TO MAKE CHANGES. WE HAVE TO STOP TALKING TO EACH OTHER AND WE HAVE TO START LISTENING AND TELLING OUR STORY TO ANYONE AND EVERYONE WHO WILL LISTEN.

THIS SPRING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION WILL PUT INTO ACTION "PROJECT OUTREACH." VERY SIMPLY, IT IS A PROGRAM THAT WILL GO ANYWHERE AND EVERYWHERE TO TELL MICHIGAN CITIZENS THE "EDUCATION STORY." NOT ONLY SO THAT THEY WILL HAVE SOME IDEA OF WHAT WE ARE TRYING TO DO, BUT MORE IMPORTANTLY, SO THAT WE CAN GET IDEAS, SUGGESTIONS AND COUNSEL AS TO WHAT DIRECTION MICHIGAN EDUCATION OUGHT TO BE GOING.

YOURS IS AN IMPORTANT ORGANIZATION AND AS AN ORGANIZATION OF RESEARCHERS, EVALUATORS -- THOSE INVOLVED IN TESTING AND ASSESSMENT -- YOU CAN ASSIST IN THIS TASK OF "TELLING THE EDUCATION STORY."

YOU MUST, AS WE ALL MUST, SERVE AS "COMMUNICATORS" AND AS THE "INFORMATION SPECIALISTS" TO LET THE PUBLIC KNOW WHAT THE SCHOOLS ARE DOING, WHAT THE PUBLIC CAN EXPECT, AND IN WHAT WAYS SCHOOLS CAN IMPROVE.

I ALSO BELIEVE VERY STRONGLY THAT MORE CONCISE, BETTER AND MORE SPECIFIC INFORMATION ABOUT STUDENT PERFORMANCE WILL BE A CONTINUING AND GROWING NEED IN THE YEARS JUST AHEAD.

HOWEVER, I THINK IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT WE BEGIN TO REPORT OUR EVALUATIONS AND OUR ASSESSMENTS IN A WAY THAT CAN BE UNDERSTOOD AND UTILIZED BY THOSE WHO DETERMINE

POLICY; THOSE WHO MAKE DECISIONS THAT DIRECTLY AFFECT OUR WORK. BOARDS OF EDUCATION, LEGISLATORS, CONGRESSMEN AND OTHERS, WILL MAKE DECISIONS WHETHER OR NOT WE ARE ABLE TO PROVIDE THEM WITH SUPPORTIVE DATA. OUR OBJECTIVE SHOULD BE TO HAVE READY AND TO PROVIDE THE BEST POSSIBLE RESEARCH DATA AVAILABLE.

WE NEED TO MAKE EVALUATION MORE USEFUL AS A POLICY INSTRUMENT THAN MERELY AS AN EXERCISE IN "STATISTICS."

I BELIEVE THAT RESEARCH AND THOSE OF YOU DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN THIS WORK HAVE A POTENTIALLY MAJOR ROLE IN DEVELOPING PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING AND ACCEPTANCE OF EDUCATION: IN DEFINING THE RELATIVE MERITS OF ALATERNATIVE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS; AND IN PROVIDING DIRECTIONS AND SUPPORT FOR IMPROVING THE DELIVERY OF INSTRUCTION TO OTHER CLIENTS.

IN SPITE OF THE PROBLEMS -- AND THERE ARE MANY -- AND IN SPITE OF THE DIFFICULTIES AND COMPLEX ISSUES, I AM CONFIDENT THAT WE CAN SOLVE OUR PROBLEMS, OVERCOME OUR DIFFICULTIES, AND RESOLVE THE ISSUES. OUR ONLY LIMITATIONS WILL BE THOSE THAT WE MIGHT OURSELVES IMAGINE.

FRENCH AUTHOR/HISTORIAN, ALEXIS DE TOCQUEVILLE, PUT IT THIS WAY:

> "DEMOCRATIC NATIONS CARE LITTLE FOR WHAT HAS BEEN, BUT ARE HAUNTED BY VISIONS OF WHAT WILL BE: IN THIS DIRECTION THEIR UNBOUNDED IMAGINATION GROWS AND DILATES BEYOND ALL MEASURE ... DEMOCRACY, WHICH SHUTS THE PAST AGAINST THE POET, OPENS THE FUTURE BEFORE HIM."

IF WE ASPRIRE TO GREATNESS IN EDUCATION, A SUCCESSFUL FUTURE CAN BE OURS.